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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

2018 SBC ANNUAL NOW AVAILABLE

NASHVILLE (BP) — The 2018 Southern Baptist Convention Annual, a collection of reports, budgets, and proceedings from the June 12-13 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Dallas as well as a compilation of historical data and reports from convention entities, has been posted online at www.sbc.net/annuals/. Hard copies are available while supplies last by emailing annual@sbcc.net, and will be shipped by the first week of October. Digital copies of all previous SBC Annuals dating back to the convention's founding in 1845 can also be found at www.sbc.net/annuals/.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA FACES ANOTHER SUIT

IOWA CITY, Iowa (BP) — For the second time in less than a year, a Christian student group has sued the University of Iowa to protect its right to select leaders who hold traditional Christian beliefs. The InterVarsity Graduate Christian Fellowship filed a lawsuit in federal court Aug. 6 after the university revoked the fellowship's status as an official student organization because leaders are required to "share the group's faith and exemplify its Christian values," according to the complaint filed by the nonprofit Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

HYMNAL MILESTONE FETED BY LIFEWAY

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — LifeWay Christian Resources is celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the latest Baptist Hymnal. The original idea was that a new hymnal for Baptists would be digital only," said Mike Harlan, director of LifeWay Worship and former Mississippi Baptist music minister. "but we did extensive research and discovered almost half of the churches we served still held hymnals every week." The result was LifeWay's new physical hymnal, a web site for digital worship resources at LifeWayWorship.com, and full accompaniment orchestrations of every song in the hymnal.



YEARS AGO — Two unidentified employees of the Relief and Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention are shown in this 1930s-era photo, likely taken in the board's former offices in the Tower Petroleum Building in downtown Dallas. (BP photo courtesy of GuideStone)

GuideStone passes century mark

SBC's financial services entity looks to future after move to new headquarters

DALLAS (BP and local reports) — In early August 1918, William Lunsford, the founding chief executive of what today is GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, received a letter from trustee Cullen F.

Thomas. In it, Lunsford was advised that the State of Texas on July 31 had granted the charter for what was named the Board of Ministerial Relief and Annuities.

The closing line of the letter simply said, "You are now a go-



LUNSFORD

ing concern. 'May you continue to grow and go.'

Growing and going has been part of the GuideStone story now for 100 years in providing products and services that churches and ministries need.

"On every desk at GuideStone is a small sign that

see GUIDESTONE on p. 9

Army base undergoing spiritual awakening

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. (BP and local reports) — This year U. S.

Army Chaplain (Capt.) Jose Rondon has seen an amazing 1,400-plus professions of faith at the Army's Fort Leonard Wood



RONDON

base in the Missouri Ozarks, his place of ministry.

In the midst of what could be described as a spiritual awakening at the 61,000-acre base bordering the city of St. Robert in Pulaski County, Rondon summarizes his part in the effort with one word: intentionality. "To be intentional is to be faithful to Christ and obedient to His Great Commission, but we will not succeed in making disciples until the lost make the first step to follow Christ as their Savior.

"To be intentional not only means to preach Christ's Word in the chapel, but to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to share His message of reconciliation if, and when, the time fits."

Ag missions meeting slated for Aug. 25

STARKVILLE, Ms. (Special) — The semi-annual meeting of the Agricultural Development Foundation (ADF) will be August 25 at First Church, Starkville.

Keynote speaker will be Harold Watson, retired Southern Baptist agricultural missionary to Philippines. Also honored will be his wife Joyce, who served with him on the mission field for the 33 years.

The Watsons' work resulted in the establishment of hundreds of churches, and Harold Watson received international recognition for the development of techniques that enabled poor Filipino farmers to produce their own food.

The most well-known of Harold Watson's innovations in Philippines was Sloping Ag-



Harold (left) and Joyce Watson

ricultural Land Technology (SALT), which reduced erosion and improved soil fertility. He was awarded the Ramon Mag-saysay Award for International Understanding, often called the "Nobel Prize of Asia."

Other recognitions followed, including a citation from then-Philippine President Corazon

Aquino and a World Food Day Silver Medal from the U. N. Food and Agriculture Organization in 1991.

After the Watsons' retirement, they remained active for twenty years in agricultural missions through ADF with Harold serving as project coordinator and Joyce serving as treasurer. They recently retired from those responsibilities.

The meeting in Starkville will be at the Warehouse Outreach Center of First Baptist Church, with registration beginning at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and lunch will be available. The Agricultural Mission Fellowship will meet at 1:00 p.m. and dismiss at 2:00 p.m.

For more information, including directions and agenda, visit www.adfmissions.org.

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Lesson learned

Being held up as an example after experiencing an embarrassing failure is never a comfortable experience. The good Baptists of Oklahoma must know that feeling after settling a lawsuit last week involving the rape of a 13-year old girl in 2016 at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center, the massive encampment of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO).

It is with the confidence that Oklahoma Baptists would want the rest of us to avoid their misfortune and prevent such an occurrence where we can, that I write about the incident in the hope that all Mississippi Baptist churches and church leadership will take heed. That's the only reason.

The following information is sourced from a specific article published by Baptist Press on Aug. 7, as well as earlier reports carried by Baptist Press.

Benjamin Petty, 37, pled guilty in January to first-degree rape, forcible sodomy, and rape by instrumentation for his actions while working as a cook with a group of Falls Creek attendees from Country Estates Church in Midwest City, Ok., according to The Oklahoman newspaper in Oklahoma City.

Information gathered during investigations allege that Petty spent several days "grooming" the victim. Grooming in this context is defined as befriending and otherwise preparing a young boy or girl who has been targeted for sexual contact.

No background check on Petty was undertaken by Country Estates Church before shipping him off to Falls Creek with the group from the church. The Falls Creek administration apparently failed to confirm that adults admitted to the encampment with their respective youth groups had undergone background checks, even though BGCO policy requires churches to vet adults before allowing them to come to Falls Creek with youth groups.

With 54,000 people attending Falls Creek events each summer, that can be a tremendous — but necessary — undertaking.

A background check on Petty would have revealed a drunk driving offense in 2014 and a municipal drug paraphernalia offense in 2000. The Oklahoman reported, adding "it is unknown whether that information would have prompted church officials to exclude him from attending the camp."

No matter. A civil lawsuit was filed against Falls Creek, Country Estates Church, and the Texas church that

brought the victim to Falls Creek. The status of the legal case against Country Estates Church and the Texas church could not be ascertained by press deadline.

The victim's attorneys have been quoted as saying that in addition to overlooking Petty, Falls Creek admitted a felon with another church group who had been in prison for two counts of first-degree manslaughter, and yet another church brought a felon convicted of methamphetamine manufacturing and child endangerment.

It's a mess. A real mess. It seems it won't go away. Compounding the scandal is the fact that in exchange for his guilty plea, the legally-blind Petty was allowed to escape punishment. A plea deal struck with the prosecutor and approved by the judge hearing the case means Petty will not serve a day in prison. The prosecutor has since resigned. The judge hasn't.

Managing activities in which our precious young people participate, such as summer camps, is a daunting task these days. Secular and business interests realize this, too. Religious institutions aren't the only ones who have to figure out ways to protect the innocence of the children entrusted to our care.

How to do that? It's complicated, but one step is highly effective: background checks. An axiom known to all law enforcement officers is, "Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior." Most sexual predators are so obsessive about their prey that they have committed illegal acts in the past that will likely be revealed during a background check.

While not perfect, background checks are a powerful backstop in the fight to protect the spiritual wellness, emotional development, and physical wholeness of our children from people who would rob them of all three in one despicable act.

That price is too high to pay. By comparison, background checks are well worth the expense. Let's not find out the hard way.

Editor's Note: LifeWay OneSource, a ministry of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, endorses backgroundchecks.com to perform screenings for churches and other ministries. Through the OneSource program, ministries can receive discounts on background checks. For more information, visit lifelway.com/backgroundchecks.

One-Verse Calvinism

I read where some fellow attempted to prove that the Apostle Paul was a Calvinist by offering up one verse of Scripture. Well, if that's true, he sure picked the wrong verse to prove his point: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." (2 Tim. 2:10).

The basic premise of Calvinism is that God has already elected who will be saved, and has rejected others. Supposedly, that decision was made before the world was created but Paul said to Timothy that he endured affliction that they (the elect) might also obtain salvation. That's strange because, according to Calvinists, the salvation of the elect is a done deal.

Why then was Paul concerned about "the elect" being saved? Why would he and the other apostles subject themselves to anguish, pain, and even death if who will be saved and who will be lost has already been decided? That would be a silly thing to do and a waste of time!

The truth is Paul was no Calvinist and to use that verse to teach that he was is absurd, for Paul was speaking of his fellow Hebrews, the true elect of God (italics are emphases mine): "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have called thee by thy name." (Isa. 45:4). Paul was concerned about the salvation of his fellow Israelites: "I say then, Hath God cast aside his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin... Even so at this present time also there is a remnant (of Israelites) according to the election (eklogē — the choice) of God." (Rom. 11:1-5)

If God has predetermined who will be saved and who will be lost, why then did Jesus die on a cross for all mankind? Note what He said about who can obtain salvation: "For God so loved the world (kosmos — the sum total of all mankind), that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever (pas — anyone and everyone that) believeth



Guest opinion

with Donnie Guy

in him should not *perish* (apollumi — be lost), but have everlasting life." (Jn. 3:16)

Now, that alone should be evidence enough that anyone can be saved, but let's see if the Bible proves whether Paul was a Calvinist or not by sharing what he himself penned in Scripture. To aid us in our search, I have translated some Greek words.

Note what Paul said to the Roman church: "For *whosoever* (pas — anyone and everyone that) shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:13.), and what he said to Timothy: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who *will* (thelo — who's desire it is to) have *all men* (anthropos — anyone and everyone) to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of truth." (1Tim. 2:3-4)

Also to Titus: "For the *grace* of God (charis — unmerited favor) that brings *salvation* (eternal salvation) hath *appeared* (has shined light) to *all men* (anthropos — anyone and everyone)." (Tit. 2:11) That verse goes along with Ephesians 2:8 — "For by *grace* (charis — unmerited favor), are ye saved through *faith* (pistis — being persuaded by the Word of God and the Spirit)."

Paul was speaking to the Ephesians about salvation but, if who will be saved and who will be lost has already determined, why would people have to be "persuaded" to receive salvation?

Neither was the Apostle Peter a Calvinist, for he said that it is not "God's will" that anyone be lost: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as

see GUY on p. 11

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U.S. Army chaplain faces court martial, prison



Jerry Squires

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (BP) — A U.S. Army investigator ignored key evidence in alleging a Southern Baptist chaplain was derelict in his duties for rescheduling a marriage retreat he was assigned to lead in order to avoid a lesbian couple, the chaplain's attorney has said.

U.S. Army Chaplain (Major) Jerry Scott Squires refused to conduct a Strong Bonds marriage retreat because a lesbian officer planned to attend, the investigating officer identified only as Major Ford said at the close of an extended investigation.

Squires is endorsed by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB), which does not affirm same sex marriage. Following Army protocol that requires him to adhere to the tenets of his endorsing agency, Squires rescheduled the retreat to allow a non-Southern Baptist chaplain to facilitate the event.

The lesbian couple registered to attend the retreat on its rescheduled date, but cancelled for unspecified reasons, Squires' attorneys said.

Squires "performed his duties with professionalism and honor according to the expectations of his endorsing agency and Department of Defense regulations," Squires' attorney Mike Berry said. "Any attempt to characterize his actions otherwise is the result of blatant anti-religious hostility."

A decorated major with more than 25 years of service, Squires faces court martial and confinement in a military prison if the investigator's

recommendation is accepted, said Berry, First Liberty Institute deputy general counsel and director of military affairs.

The Army "is threatening to punish one of its chaplains because he followed the rules," Berry said in an Aug. 6 press release in response to the investigator's report. "The Army, or Congress, must hold Major General (Kurt) Sonntag accountable for allowing this aggressive anti-religious hostility against its military chaplains to occur under his command."

Sonntag is commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence, which initiated the retreat.

The "dereliction of duty" recommendation follows Ford's second investigation of the complaint filed Feb. 6. After an initial finding that Squires unlawfully discriminated against the couple, Ford was ordered April 28 to reopen his investigation, according to an Army memorandum to which First Liberty links at its website.

NAMB executive director of chaplaincy Douglas L. Carver, a former U.S. Army chief of chaplains, has defended Squires.

"The relationship between endorsed military chaplains and their ecclesiastical authority is sacrosanct and protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution," Carver told Baptist Press after Ford's initial findings.

"In a technical sense, military chaplains are 'on loan' to the Armed Forces from their

respective faith groups who, in turn, expect the military to be faithful stewards of our pastors in uniform," Carver pointed out.

Squires has "our full support and prayers as he remains faithful to his Lord, his tenets of faith, and his commitment to serve all soldiers under his care," Carver stressed.

After an extended investigation, Ford said Squires denied the lesbian couple "opportunity to attend a Strong Bonds retreat run by and paid for by" the Army and violated Army Regulation (AR) 165-1 "when he failed to notify his command and his chaplain technical chain that he could not perform services for (lesbians) due to his endorser restrictions."

In its defense of Squires, First Liberty said Ford's report stands on a "false premise" that the lesbian couple was denied opportunity to attend the retreat, when in actuality they "elected not to attend."

Ford overlooked facts, contradicted himself, and included factual and legal errors, discrepancies, and deficiencies in his report, Berry said.

"Ford's report of investigation constitutes a clear and present danger to the constitutional rights of all chaplains," Berry told the Army in his official response to Ford's findings.

"If Army chaplains are to maintain any trust and confidence in their ability to perform their duties without fear of this kind of threat, you must disapprove MAJ Ford's findings and recommendations."

Okla. convention settles child rape lawsuit against encampment

DAVIS, Ok. (BP and local reports) — The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) has settled a lawsuit related to the 2016 rape of a 13-year-old girl at the convention's Falls Creek Conference Center near Davis.

Benjamin Petty, 37, pleaded guilty in January to first-degree rape, forcible sodomy, and rape by instrumentation. The Oklahoman reported. A plea deal that let him avoid prison led to public outcry and the resignation of a prosecutor who negotiated the deal.

Petty, who is legally blind, was a cook at Falls Creek at the time of the offenses. The Oklahoman reported previously. A background check on Petty would have revealed a drunk driving offense in 2014 and a municipal drug paraphernalia offense in 2000,

The Oklahoman reported, adding "it is unknown whether that information would have prompted church officials to exclude him from attending the camp."

The unnamed victim sued BGCO; Country Estates Church in Midwest City, Ok., which took Petty with them to Falls Creek without performing a criminal background check; and First Church in Terrell, Texas, with which the victim had traveled to Falls Creek.

Terms of the settlement were not disclosed. The Oklahoman newspaper reported Aug. 5, but one sentence of the settlement agreement was not under seal: "Following this incident, the BGCO conducted a review of its policies and procedures and has recognized additional efforts to provide as safe environment

"We have prayed for a respectful resolution of this very serious matter. Looking to the future, we are continually working with churches to take every measure we can, to provide a safe environment where our campers can experience life with Jesus Christ."

Brian Hobbs

BGCO communications director

as possible for campers visiting Falls Creek."

BGCO communications director Brian Hobbs, who also serves as editor of The Baptist Messenger, the convention's weekly news journal, said in a statement released to Baptist Press. "We have prayed for a respectful resolution of this very serious matter. Looking to the future, we are continually working with churches to take every measure we can, to provide a safe environment

where our campers can experience life with Jesus Christ."

"We are thankful that the ministry of Falls Creek continues forward to bless thousands of people in Oklahoma and across the region, for the glory of God."

The victim's attorney Bruce Robertson told The Oklahoman, "We are glad the matter was resolved to the satisfaction of our client and her family, as they have suffered greatly from this event."

"We are glad the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma conducted a review of its policies and has recognized additional efforts are needed to provide Falls Creek campers as safe an environment as possible. We hope they follow through and implement the needed changes."

Falls Creek, located in southern Oklahoma's Arbuckle Mountains, hosts more than 54,000 students and sponsors at youth camps each summer, according to the conference center's website.

LifeWay Christian Resources' LifeWay OneSource program endorses the company, backgroundchecks.com, to perform background screenings for churches and other ministries. Through the OneSource program, ministries can receive discounts on background checks.

A good friend of mine was telling me about a sad and difficult time that he and his family had experienced back during the summer. They have several dogs and one of them had been hit by a car. The dog lived but had two broken legs on the same side. The owner brought the dog back to the house, saw what had happened, and set out to doctor the beloved family pet. He described the medical procedure to me as he set about to set the bones and put splints on both legs of the dog. Then he gave the dog some of his wife's antibiotics and some aspirin and petted him to sleep.

The next day the dog was not up running around, but he was awake and alert. Days passed and slowly but gradually in a few weeks, the dog was walking around. The proud owner said he was a little slanted, but he was walking okay. He went on to tell me that if you would put him on the side of a hill, he would level out. It sounds like a crazy story, but it really happened. Now after some more weeks have passed, the dog is still slanted, but he's getting around real good.

The only reason that I share this tidbit of wisdom with you is because some folks that we meet in life are slanted, and some of those slanted people come to our churches. They too may have been hit by some of the high-speed traf-



The Slanted Dog

fic of this world, or they may have just run in some places where they shouldn't, some places where they have been advised not to go, and there all of a sudden, wham, they got broken up. They needed care and, hopefully, received it from some well-meaning people who would be around them, loving them and caring for them. They need patching up and even though it may be with less than perfection from the medical community, they got the best that could be given. In time, they too healed and now they get to stirring around and they look just a little slanted.

One of the good things is that those of us who have been hurt and healed and walk a little slanted ourselves, we look at those folks and they find of look normal. At least, they look about as normal as we do. They are grateful to be alive and walking, getting around, and so are we. In time, with encouragement and time for healing, they may find a place of service on a hillside where they even seem level and somewhat normal.

The old crippled dog is a beautiful study and can be seen as you follow Jesus as He selects His disciples.

Twelve of them. All of them from different backgrounds. All of them with unique stories. All of them with a leg or two broken in life. A handful of fishermen, a tax collector, one or all of them with busted up and broken problems and none of them professional, religious people. I think you could say, without question, all of them a little slanted.

It is good to know that while we are all like that — banged, bruised, and busted sometimes — that Jesus comes. He comes to help and love, redeem and restore. He comes and picks us up, points us in the right direction, and nudges us to get on walking down the road even though we may be a little slanted. He can use us regardless of our deficiencies and our leanings that make others stop and stare at us. He created us and now can enter into recreating us and helping us to find just the right place where twisted and slanted as we may be, we fit and God can wonderfully use us.

To all the slanted dogs out there and slanted people who are seeking to follow Jesus, we raise our voices together to say, "Thank You, God, for touching us, healing us, and allowing us to walk this journey with You."

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **Trinity Church, Laurel:** Revival, Aug. 18 - 22; Sat., back to school rally, 6 p.m.; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Bill Britt, speaker; Joseph Walters, music.

► **Sunrise Church, Leake County:** Aug. 19 - 22, 7 p.m.;

Joe Cole, speaker; Charles Wallace, worship leader.

► **Rolling Creek Church, Clarke County:** Homecoming, Aug. 19; service, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship; Billy Brumfield, speaker.

► **Liberty Church, Pontotoc:** Homecoming, Aug. 19;

service, 11 a.m., followed by meal; Bobby Cossey speaker; Fishers of Men, music; Harvey Sewell, pastor.

► **Bethel Church, Hazlehurst:** Homecoming, Aug. 26; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish meal; Ricky Ken-

nedy, speaker; Brenda Nixon, worship leader; Tyson Windom, pastor.

► **Short Creek Church, Yazoo City:** 99th homecoming, Aug. 19; service, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Bill Hutto, speaker; Theresa and Jeff Jones, music.

BIBL i O C I P H E R

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WHHO YWBE IH WHBN: YSEW YWBE

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DHBPXNHO EV IVX: BCO XCEV IVX

EWBE WHBN PWBGG DVNH FH TSKHC.

DBNM RVXN: EYHCEI-RVXN

Clue: S = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 5:39

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

CLASSIFIEDS

THE NORTHSHORE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION (SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA) IS SEEKING RESUMES FOR AN ASSOCIATIONAL MISSION STRATEGIST (DOM). Interested persons should visit www.northshorebaptists.net/search.

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MS POSITIONS

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FIRST BAPTIST OF WINONA IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME STUDENTS MINISTER. All interested candidates please email your resume to cbcoone@fbcwinona.org or mail to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 408, Winona, MS, 38967, ATTN: Daniel Hill.

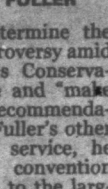
RAYMOND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON, MS, SEEKING A PART TIME YOUTH PASTOR. Email resume to jhomer56@hotmail.com

HEUCKS RETREAT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Persons interested may email resume to Corey Myers at cmymers913@gmail.com or mail to Heucks Retreat Baptist Church, 2167 Heucks Retreat Rd NE, Brookhaven, MS 39601, attn: Corey Myers. Position description available upon request. Deadline to apply is October 1, 2018.

RICHMOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN RURAL LEE COUNTY, MS, NEAR TUPELO IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PRAISE TEAM LEADER/MUSIC MINISTER. Email resume to baptistworshipleader@gmail.com

OBITUARIES

Charles Fuller, 36, a Virginia pastor who chaired the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Peace Committee, died July 28 in Roanoke, Va. Formed in 1985, the Peace Committee was charged to "seek to determine the sources" of controversy amid the convention's Conservative Resurgence and "make findings and recommendations." Among Fuller's other denominational service, he preached the convention sermon in 1985 to the largest SBC annual meeting in history and served on multiple boards and committees, including chairman of the now-defunct Radio and Television Commission and the Committee on Order of Business. During Fuller's 38-year



FULLER

pastorate at First Church, Roanoke, Va., he saw membership grow from 2,000 to 6,000 and became somewhat of a local celebrity in southwest and central Virginia for his radio and television broadcasts. Most famously, he delivered a daily 60-second radio devotional called God's Minute, beginning in 1972. A native of Andalusia, AL, Fuller earned a bachelor of arts from the University of Richmond in Richmond, Va., and a bachelor of divinity from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth. He was awarded three honorary doctorates. Fuller was preceded in death by his first wife of 44 years, Pat, and his second wife of four years, Margaret. He is survived by his third wife Carol, three sons, eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren. A service of worship and celebration was held Aug. 3 at First Church, Roanoke. (Baptist Press)

John Bisagno, 84, longtime pastor of First Church in Houston, Texas, who nominated Kosciusko native Morris Chapman in his victorious race for Southern Baptist Convention president in 1990, died Aug. 5 in Nashville following a battle with cancer. During Bisagno's 30-year tenure at First Church, Houston, beginning in 1970, the congregation grew from fewer than 400 to 22,000 members, Baptist Press reported in 1999. During that period, the church also baptized 15,000 people, gave \$250 million to missions, and re-



BISAGNO

located from downtown to its current location in west Houston. Following an early career as a Dixieland jazz trumpeter, Bisagno was saved and called to ministry in 1952. He served as an itinerant evangelist for about a decade before accepting in 1965 the pastorate of First Southern Church in Del City, Ok., and eventually filling the pulpit of First Church, Houston. Bisagno earned a bachelor of music degree from Oklahoma Baptist University and multiple honorary doctorates, and authored more than 30 books. He is survived by three adult children, eight grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. Funeral service was held at First Church, Houston, on Aug. 17. (Baptist Press and local reports)

Hueston Adkins, longtime Mississippi Baptist pastor, died August 3 at Poplar Springs Nursing Center in Meridian. He pastored for over 50 years, serving Sylva Church (twice); Bethlehem Church, Laurel; West Ellisville Church, Ellisville; First Church, Mendenhall; Woodville Heights Church, Jackson; and also served as associational missions director for Jasper County in Bay Springs. After retirement, he was interim pastor at several churches including First Church, Soso, and Macedonia Church, Suqualena. In 1962, Adkins left his business as an insurance agent after surrendering to the ministry and beginning classes at Mississippi College in Clinton, from which he graduated. He then went on to earn both master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary. Adkins was preceded in death by his wife, Jane Elizabeth Hollifield Adkins, and wife of 64 years, Amie Sue Hammonds Adkins; his parents, Joseph Loyd Adkins and Nancy Wade Adkins; sisters Mary McKinley and Agnes Moore; and brother Jerald Adkins. He is survived by sons Landry Hueston Adkins of Meridian, Jesse Tullios Adkins and Joseph Bradford Adkins of Houston, Texas; five grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. Funeral service was August 7 at Edon Church, Stringer, with interment in the Edon Cemetery. Colonial Chapel Funeral Home of Bay Springs was in charge of arrangements.



ADKINS

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP and local reports) — A permanent Sirius XM satellite radio channel dedicated exclusively to messages from "America's Pastor" will launch on Aug. 20. The Billy Graham Channel began a series of limited runs last November, beginning with Graham's 99th birthday, and included a temporary tribute channel in conjunction with his passing earlier this year. Soon, subscribers to the Sirius XM pay service around the world will have access to Graham's messages 24 hours a day by tuning into Channel 460 or listening online. Since Graham's passing, ministry supporters and Sirius XM subscribers have steadily contacted the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), as well as the Sirius XM company, to petition for more access to the inspiring messages from the world-renowned evangelist. Meanwhile, Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C., opened an exhibit on Aug. 5 to honor the late Southern Baptist evangelist and give visitors a glimpse of his impact on the world. Pilgrim Preacher: Billy

Graham is centerpiece of new satellite radio channel



GOSPEL BROADCAST — Billy Graham (left) and Cliff Barrows, music and program director for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, record an edition of The Hour of Decision for radio audiences in 1959. (BR photo courtesy of BGEA)

Graham, and the Challenges of the Modern World, will be on display through Jan. 29, 2019.

With the support of BGEA, Museum of the Bible is presenting rare video footage, photographs, and artifacts to help tell the story of how Graham became a leading evangelical pres-

ence in the world during more than seven decades of ministry.

The special exhibit is designed to show a more personal side of Graham, according to the museum's website, and aims to "reveal his complexities as a human being" in a cultural icon.

Staff Changes



Jason Powell (third from right) and his wife Amanda (third from left) are welcomed after Jason accepted the call to pastor **FIRST CHURCH, BEAUMONT**, by search committee members (from left) Scott Dearman, Eric Carnahan, Carlos Herring, and Cathryne Wells. Jason began service July 1.



PINEVIEW CHURCH, LAUREL, called Darryl Stringer as pastor June 3. He is shown with his wife Linda.



FIRST CHURCH, KOSCIUSKO, has called Chris Cauthen as worship pastor. He is shown with his wife Courtney and daughters Lillie and Avie Grace.

Just for the Record



ROBINSON CHURCH, PEORIA, hosted a back to school event Aug. 4. The children participated in a Bible-based and community service scavenger hunt, blessing of the backpacks service, received an assortment of school supplies, and enjoyed pizza.



INGOMAR CHURCH, UNION COUNTY ASSOCIATION, sent out several mission teams in July. July 3-10, 14 youth and adults served Gardiner Church in Montana conducting VBS and assisting with construction projects; July 11-20, pastor Terry Cutrer and Bryan McElroy participated in evangelism ministry with International Commission, Monte Claros, Brazil; and July 18-21, 18 youth and six adults served with M-Fuge in Nashville, Tenn.



SPRINGFIELD CHURCH, SCOTT ASSOCIATION, recently held a baby dedication day. Shown are interim pastor Ken McLemore, Justin, Brandy, and Kodi Earls and Jeremy, Jennifer, and Prentiss Watts.

Vacation Bible School



FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, STARKVILLE: Shown are participants.



LITTLE BAHALA CHURCH, WESSON: Shown are participants.



The VBS participants of **PINEVIEW CHURCH, LAUREL**, collected money for Glory House, a local non-profit Christian outreach facility. Shown is pastor Danny Stringer presenting a check to owner Hope Staples.

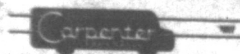
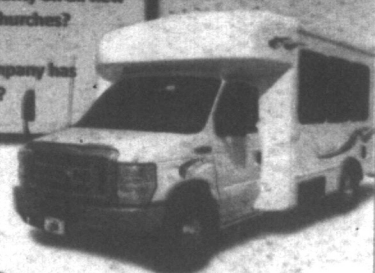
4 Questions for Church Bus Buyers:

1. Which Bus Company has sold more buses to churches than any other company in the country?
2. Which Bus Company has more exclusive endorsements from denominational organizations than any other?
3. Which is the only Bus Company to offer a 7 Year / 70,000 Body & Chassis Warranty on all new buses sold to churches?
4. Which Bus Company has the best prices?

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Just for the Record



CALVARY CHURCH, VICKSBURG, hosted an "Everybody's birthday party" for members and friends. Tables were decorated for each month of the year.



Six people were baptized at **CENTERPOINT CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN**, on Aug. 5. Shown are Keisha Boling, Karrie LeBlanc, Cindy Sandidge, Presley Leblanc (front), Brittany Durr, and Rachel Hart.



CENTRAL CHURCH, MERIDIAN, hosted a Back-to-School luncheon for the faculty and staff of Crestwood Elementary School on August 3. Pictured from Central Hospitality Team are Kim Waters and Liz Cain. Glenn Jackson, pastor.



INGOMAR CHURCH, UNION COUNTY ASSOCIATION, sent out four mission teams in July. Six youth and two adults served with Access International in Guatemala June 30 - July 7.



FIRST CHURCH, CLARA, recognized Youth Minister, Jason L. Sehon, and his wife, Marsha on August 5 for his 20 years of service as Youth Minister at FBC, Clara. He and Marsha are shown with some of the current youth group as well as former youth.



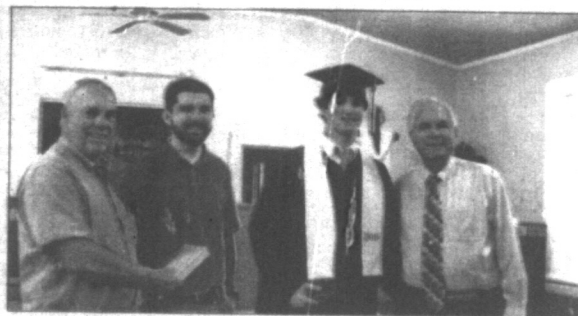
GILLSBURG CHURCH, GILLSBURG, recognized participants of the children's summer program Reading Rainbow along with librarians.



CALVARY CHURCH, SUMMIT, treated their kids with a back to school parade Aug. 8. Kids rode, walked, or pushed rides to toss candies to the waiting crowd as they celebrated another school year. Bobbie Dunaway and Kody Tullos were in charge of the parade. Mike Burns, pastor.



Youth from **PROVIDENCE CHURCH, LAWRENCE ASSOCIATION**, recently did work for the Center for Pregnancy Choices of Lawrence County. Tyler and Erica Hester, youth ministers; Scott Johnson, pastor.



LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, POPE, honored high school and college seniors May 13. Shown are deacon Billy Smith, Zachary Sellers, Caleb Capwell, and interim pastor Bob Self.



We must adhere to the judicial principle "Innocent until proven guilty." I don't want to appear naïve, but I believe we should give our neighbor, and especially our brother or sister, the benefit of the doubt. According to the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12 KJV, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets"), we are supposed to treat others the way we would like to be treated. I would expect the "benefit of the doubt" from my friends, if not from my enemies.

James 4:11-12 says, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge." We should not repeat gos-

On the other hand

tip, but we also should not believe it or listen to it. In fact, if we love the person accused, we will confront in love the messenger of the gossip.

Too many believers hold to the idea that "if there's enough smoke, there is definitely fire." Dry ice produces plenty of smoke, but there is no fire.

Matthew 7:1 is misused often — "Judge not, that ye be not judged." It does not say to the local church "discipline not, that ye be not disciplined." Go read Matthew 18:15-19. In the same chapter (strong cross reference) 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." One's fruit

is obvious and needs no speculation or reading between the lines — which is the idea of "judge" in verse 1. "Fruit" is objective; "judging" is subjective.

To be prejudiced is to pre-judge a situation without the facts. Only God has all the facts. Thus, "Innocent till proven guilty."

ON THE OTHER HAND, having said all this, we must take any complaint or charge seriously. Sexual harassment, spousal abuse, or any other misconduct does terrible damage to the individual, but also to the Kingdom.

If a complaint or charge is frivolous, we bring it into the "SONLIGHT"

to expose the accuser and give the accused the opportunity to defend themselves. If the complaint or charge is legitimate, it deserves to be brought into the "SONLIGHT." "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free," John 8:32.

Proper protocols must be established and followed in any ministry, business, or any setting in order to protect the vulnerable and the innocent. To fail to do this is irresponsible and merits consequences. **ON THE OTHER HAND**, we must practice "Innocent till proven guilty."

Digby is executive director-treasurer of the Christian Action Commission. He can be reached at (601) 292-3329/office, (662) 284-9163/cell, or by e-mail at kdigby@christianaction.com.

AWAKENING

cont. from p. 1

Because of his reputation for being intentional in his ministry, many have come to hear Rondon share the Gospel on Sundays.

We have seen 1,459 soldiers come to Christ since March of this year. God is doing great things at Fort Leonard Wood among the hundreds of soldiers who have come to know Christ personally.



CARVER

Retired Major General Douglas L. Carver, retired U.S. Army chief of chaplains and currently executive director of chaplaincy for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga., says what is happening at Fort Leonard Wood is not an exception. "Our troops, who are increasingly hungry for truth and relevancy in their lives, are finding a faith that works through a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ."

"The current spiritual awakening at Fort Leonard Wood is indicative of a great move of God taking place within the Armed Services today," Carver says.

■ More than 2,000 troops gathered in Doughboy Stadium at Fort Benning, Ga., this past Easter to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

■ Army chaplains are currently baptizing an average of 70 soldiers during every basic combat training cycle at Fort Jackson, S.C.



WELL-ATTENDED — Soldiers gather for a July 29 chapel service at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, where U.S. Army Chaplain (Capt.) Jose Rondon serves as a chaplain at the facility. Rondon has seen more than 1,400 soldiers come to faith at Fort Leonard Wood since March. (BP photo)

■ The U.S. Air Force Chaplaincy recently rolled out a new program called Faith-Works, which is a collection of evidence-based programs and materials promoting spiritual resilience for airmen and their families.

■ The military has built more chapels since 9/11 than any other period of American history except World War II.

In the past two years, Southern Baptist military chaplains have reported there have been tens of thousands of professions of faith and

thousands of baptisms, Carver says.

"Historically, God has often used the military as a catalyst for revival," he notes. "Many attribute the spread of Christianity in the first century to Roman soldiers deployed throughout the Roman Empire. The Lord is answering our prayers for revival within our military communities."

"I've prayed for over 40 years for our troops and their families to experience the reality of Jesus Christ in a new and fresh way."

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

GUIDESTONE

cont. from p. 1

reminds us daily that we exist to honor the Lord by being a lifelong partner with our participants in enhancing their financial security," GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins said. "That connects us to William Lunsford's early charge to the Southern Baptist Convention, and it carries us forward to continue to serve our participants with excellence."

Today, GuideStone is a \$15-billion financial services organization serving nearly a quarter-million pastors, professors, ministers, missionaries, hospital workers, and other ministry workers. Through its affiliate GuideStone Funds, an award-winning family of 24 mutual funds and risk profiles, church and ministry staff are able to invest with the nation's largest Christian-screened mutual fund family.

Mission:Dignity

Through Mission:Dignity, GuideStone also provides support for nearly 1,800 retired Southern Baptist pastors and their widows living near the poverty line.

"When William Lunsford first offered the vision for what has become GuideStone, he was concerned for the plight of old, retired pastors who could no longer serve and had no money for retirement," Hawkins said. "He raised the consciousness of the Southern Baptist Convention, and he set out to raise funds for the effort."

"Mission:Dignity is the contemporary embodiment of that charge."

Through Mission:Dignity, 100% of donations from churches, Sunday School classes, and individuals go to support retired Baptist work-

GuideStone® Financial Resources

ers and their widows in need.

"Thanks to an endowment set up many years ago, all of our operational expenses are provided for," Hawkins said. "I don't know of any other ministry that is able to guarantee that 100% of gifts go to help people in need."

Hawkins, a pastor and prolific writer before becoming president of GuideStone, donates all of his author's royalties and proceeds to benefit Mission:Dignity from his best-selling Code series of devotionals — The Joshua Code; The Jesus Code; The James Code; The Daniel Code; The Christmas Code; The Believer's Code; and The Nehemiah Code, as well as VIP: How to Influence with Vision, Integrity, and Purpose.

"We're on a mission to provide dignity to some men and women who have not been forgotten by the Lord who called them to serve," Hawkins said. "It's our joy and humble duty to serve them in their sunset years."

Centennial noted

GuideStone's trustees celebrated the ministry's centennial during their July 30-31 meeting, held in New York City. Messengers to the 2004 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting approved its current name and expanded its products and ser-

vices to evangelical churches and ministries.

GuideStone had previously had been known as the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for several decades.

In May 1918, Lunsford stood before the messengers to the SBC's annual meeting in Hot Springs, Ar., and voiced a clarion call: "Give yourself wholeheartedly to the work. We'll stand back of you. If you fall in the work, we'll care for you; if you die, we will not allow your family to suffer. If you grow old in the work, we'll comfort you in your declining years."

That charge has never strayed far from the hearts of GuideStone's subsequent leaders, said Hawkins, the entity's president since 1997.

"I am a firm believer that as we care for this ministry, we should never stray far from Lunsford's original vision — and that's true for any leader of any organization," Hawkins said. "We are stewards for a small snapshot in time until we pass it on."

The work was initially funded by a \$100,000 gift from the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources). During its first decade, the fledgling board found favor with industrialists John D. Rockefeller Sr., a Northern Baptist, and his son John D. Rockefeller Jr., an



MOVE SCHEDULED — In late August, GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention will relocate to Pinnacle Tower in North Dallas, about 10 miles north of their current location. The current GuideStone headquarters in the Uptown District has been sold to developers. (BP photo)

ecumenist, who between them donated nearly one million dollars to its efforts.

The future

At the start of a new century, Hawkins looks forward to new opportunities. On August 20, GuideStone will move from its headquarters of 29 years in Dallas' Uptown neighborhood to new leased space 10 miles north of the city center. The new location will help foster collaboration, innovation, and efficiency to help GuideStone's 425 workers better serve participants today and into the future.

"We are indeed a ministry that adopts best business practices for the benefit of those we serve," said John R. Jones, chief operating officer of GuideStone. "Every day, we challenge our people to look for new opportunities to serve our participants, to anticipate their needs and to exceed their expectations."

"This new office space will help us have the physical facilities to better accomplish how we work today and into the future."

Aiming high

Another part of that future is continuing to work to ensure that pastors have best-in-class options for investing their retirement savings, and that pastors and churches have access to health care options that meet their unique needs.

Meeting the needs of churches with health care cov-

erage for their staffs has been part of GuideStone's commitment since the mid-1960s and continues today. Recognizing that health care costs continue to grow nationwide, GuideStone created Secure Health 3000, a new lower-cost alternative health plan that offers a unique benefit structure to provide peace of mind while costing significantly less than a comprehensive plan.

Ensuring churches have adequate property and casualty insurance is another key component of GuideStone's ministry. Through an alliance with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company of Ft. Wayne, Ind., GuideStone works to help churches protect their people and property.

Local church focus

GuideStone, Hawkins emphasized, is committed to the local church and its people. "All of our sister entities in Southern Baptist life are focused on the message of the Gospel, and we are thankful for each of them. We are the only entity, though, that is focused on the messenger of the Gospel."

"It is our sincere hope and heart that as we close out our first century and embark on our second that we do so with a fleeting glance to honor the past and learn from it, but [with] a focused gaze to the future and what the Lord will do through us for those whom He has called to serve Him."

For more information on GuideStone, visit www.guidestone.org/

Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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(601) 922-2242
www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

JULY 1-15

MEMORIALS

Ms. Nancy Williamson
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mr. Sam Wilson
Branch BC

JULY 16-31

HONORS

Ms. Shirley Tillman
Dr. & Mrs. James H. Brewer

JULY 16-31

MEMORIALS

Mr. Ernest "Ernie" F. Abel Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Pope
Mrs. Gwen S. Daves
Adult III Deceased SS Class
Members
Adult III SSC, North Columbia BC
Ms. JoNell Alexander
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Ms. Lohmer G. Anthony
Faithful Worker's SSC, Salem BC
Ms. Jana Maples Aust
Arlington BC
Ms. Doris Blackwell
Mr. & Mrs. James Lofton
Ms. Betty Bonner

Dr. & Mrs. Steve Huber
Mr. Tom Bowen
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Ann Denton
Mr. Hector Brinson
Mrs. Syble B. Lee
Mr. Jahazel Buckley
Mr. Ted Buckley
Mr. Arthur Gerald "Jerry" Butler
Leslie, DeRina & Doug Usher
Rev. Paul Gene Cain
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Mr. John M. Campbell
Ms. Beth B. Cain
Ms. Marion Pickett Carmichael
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Ms. Inez Carnegie
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Mr. Paul Ott Carruth
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Ms. Charlene Cox
Arlington BC
Mrs. Mariana Davis
Mrs. Gwen S. Daves
Mr. Doyle Doyle
Ms. Margaret Smith
Ms. Patsy Dyess
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mrs. Martha Estes
Mrs. Margaret M. Davis
Mr. James Evans
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Mr. Robert Garick
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Mr. George W. Garner
Mr. & Mrs. Leo Mooney
Mr. Jeremy Holmes
Mr. Robert Rosenberg

Ms. Faye McNeill
Ms. Kathleen Elstrott
Ms. Miki Edwards
Mrs. Mary F. Garner
Mrs. Anne McKee Gerald
Mr. & Mrs. David Gladden
Mr. Neal Giles
Branch BC
Mr. Derwood Gordon
Members of Mount Vernon BC
Mr. Tommy Graham
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Moseley
Mr. H. T. Green
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mrs. Patricia "Pat" Green
Bryant SSC, Prentiss BC
Mrs. Syble B. Lee
Mrs. Karen Harrelson
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Lenard
Ms. Nancy Harris
Mr. & Mrs. Troy L. King
Mrs. Mary Glenn Harrison
Mary SSC, FBC Columbia
Ms. Louise Fletcher Hollingsworth
Wayne, Genie, and Jeremy Powell
Mr. Guy Holston
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Ms. Totsy Fuller James
Mr. & Mrs. James Rolfe
Mr. & Mrs. Brent Wood
Melissa Magee
Ms. Katie Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur D. Burnett
Ms. Myra Hughes Kirkland
Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Wooley
Ms. Rachel Ledbetter
Ms. Joyce Williams
Mr. Daniel M. Linton
Mr. & Mrs. Eddie S. Woodruff
Ms. Nellie Lou Lott
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Ann Denton
Ms. Donna Foster Magee
Rex & Faye McCord
Zilphia Shearer
Jack & Laverna Broome
Mr. David Marcus
Mr. & Mrs. Clay Campbell
Mr. Walter McCool
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore, III
Mr. & Mrs. Ward Brister
Ms. JoNell McDaniel
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait, Jr.
Mr. Tommy McDaniel
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. Gerald McGuire
Mr. & Mrs. Clay Campbell
Mr. Carroll McNease
Mr. & Mrs. Herman L. Dungan
Mr. Kent W. Mehehee
Uncle Kenneth, Aunt Doris and Renee Megehee
Mrs. Bobbie Mills
Cheer & Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Ms. Bobbie Rae Mills
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry L. Powell
Mrs. Voda Mullen
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. Larry Joe Myrich
Cheer & Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Ms. Margaret Stuart Nix
Ms. Patricia Sutton

Mr. Aubrey Paris
Cheer & Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Ms. Jo Carol Parkerson
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Ms. Frances Peoples
Ms. Sue M. Moore
Mr. John Pennington
Mr. & Mrs. Reece Douglas, Jr.
Mrs. Frances Peoples
Mrs. Martha B. West
Mr. Daniel Powell
Mr. & Mrs. Reece Douglas, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. David (Eleanor) Pruitt
Miss Sarah Marie Smith
Mr. Boyd Allen Ramage
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Alexander
Mrs. Mildred Raybon
Bryant SSC, Prentiss BC
Mr. Henry Breeland Roberts
Men's SSC, Whitesand BC
Mr. Less Robinson
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Mr. Ralph Rone Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew

Mrs. Louise Sellers
Mr. & Mrs. George Sellers
Mr. Roy Shell Jr.
Ms. Ann Smith
Mr. Bill Sistrunk
Mrs. Joe L. Jackson
Mr. Doyle Smith
Cheer & Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Mrs. Doyle Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith
Mr. John "Buddy" E. Spring
Mr. & Mrs. Percy J. Peeler
Wells Creek Hunting Club
Mr. Joe Steele
Mr. & Mrs. M. E. "Sonny" Newton, Jr.
Mr. Mike Stokes
Ms. Harriet McGehee
Ms. Bonnie Sturdivant
Ms. Carolyn C. Pogue
Mr. Lyle Earl Tillman
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Tillman
Ms. Linda Trigg
Ms. Mary Lou Lott

Ann Denton
Mr. Bobby Trussell
Mr. & Mrs. Hembree Brandon,
Steve and Lisa
Mrs. Elaine Wall
Chris Douglas
George Upton
Valerie Naquin
Easthaven BC
Mr. & Mrs. Charles B. Keeler
Ms. Peggy M. Kitchin
Ms. Mildred Walley
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Strickland
Mrs. Rachel West
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
Mr. Marvin White
The Rogers Family
Mrs. Betty Williams
Stanton BC
Ms. Mary Nell Williams
Mrs. Penny Washington
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Cothran
Ms. Sadie Williamson
Ms. Mary Lou Lott
Ann Denton



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BCV EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The BCV employs Christian, mission-minded, husband and wife teams, without dependent children or pets, to serve in the position of Houseparents. The couples must be mature Christian adults with personal integrity, character and of good reputation with standards and ethics expected of any member of The Baptist Children's Village staff.

They receive a salary with benefits and are provided a private bedroom and meals while on duty. The primary job responsibility of Houseparents is to maintain a home-like environment that models healthy, Christian family living for children and youth residents. They are the primary caregivers and help with everything from transportation and homework to laundry and meals when on duty.

Houseparent responsibilities are varied and somewhat dependent upon which campus and to which cottage the couple is assigned. However, all Houseparents need to be in good physical, mental and emotional health. They must be cooperative and comfortable working in a team environment.

To apply for the current Houseparent openings, please contact Celeste Cade at ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com or 601-922-2242.

A complete job description and application may be downloaded at www.baptistchildrensvillage.com.

Thankful • 2 Samuel 22:26-36, 50-51

Today's lesson has several Psalms David wrote expressing gratitude to God for His blessings and care. "Therefore I will give thanks to you among the nations, LORD; I will sing praises about your name. He is a tower of salvation for his king; he shows loyalty to his anointed, to David and his descendants forever," 2 Samuel 22:50-51 (CSB). David is taking a grand view of what God has done for Him. God's blessings were so bountiful and wonderful that King David was going to brag about God's abundant care to and in all the nations. God's abundance caused David to sing about His name to all the nations, not limited to just Israel.

David let it be known that any time he sang psalms about his LORD; they would be praises—praises about His Name. David praised Him because of His loyalty to him personally and as the anointed King of Israel. David understood God's loyalty would last forever to all of his descendants. The fullest meaning of this promise comes to us through Jesus Christ, David's descendant who fulfills the promise of David's descendant on his throne forever.

As New Testament Christians, we can have an even richer understanding of Jesus Christ as the King of King's reigning on David's eternal throne. This in-

creased New Testament understanding can give us even greater spiritual appreciation of the truths in David's Psalms here in 2 Samuel 22 and 23. "David sang to the Lord the words of this song when the LORD delivered him from the hands of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul," 2 Samuel 22:1 (NIV). The psalm that follows was probably written very early in David's adult life—some of it maybe even before he ascended the throne of Judah.

David and many other poets were impressed with the strength of rocks as a great place to hide from danger. As a teenager, I had opportunity to come to appreciate the safety that a large rock can provide. My Dad and I were deer hunting in the high mountains of the National Forest in New Mexico. We went up a fairly large draw between two sheer cliffs and then chose a spot on one side of the valley where we had a good view of deer or anything else moving in the valley below.



Explore the Bible

with Don Hicks

We stationed ourselves on a cliff and began to watch for our buck to come into view with a good shot to harvest the deer that would certainly come just any minute. What happened next was a very unpleasant surprise. We noticed other hunters on the other side of the valley. It was actually not very far across the open expanse of the valley, although it would

have been a major hike to get across to them. They were being very loud and boisterous, definitely not hunting well. We watched them, pretty

certain they were not aware we were there. Then it became obvious that they were drunk and mishandling their high-powered rifles.

Someone in that party fired across the valley in our general direction. We could hear the whistle of that shell, while maybe not that close and almost certainly not aimed at us. My dad moved us very quietly off the exposed cliff and behind a very large bolder [rock]. We waited in

the cleft of the rock until we were certain the unruly and therefore unsafe hunting party left. That incident happened well over 55 years ago but I still understand the thought behind this phrase in David's psalm, "my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior—from violent men you save me," 2 Samuel 22:3 (NIV).

David was attacked by violent men who intended to kill him and God saved him. My dad and I only had to avoid accidental danger (some careless hunters, will shoot anything that moves and we used the rock to not be seen moving). David said the rock (God) was his fortress, his refuge, his savior. God is more than a place to hide, he is an active savior leading us to safety and providing salvation even when He has to take the initiative to bring us salvation. Only God has the ability to always successfully provide salvation if we call on Him.

David said, actually sang, "He shows unfailing kindness to his anointed," 2 Samuel 22:51b (NIV). A valid definition of "anointed" is chosen.

Hicks is associational missions director for Jasper Association in Bay Springs.

Prioritize • Nehemiah 6:1-3, 15-16; 8:1-3, 5-8

Nehemiah worked on the wall in spite of difficult circumstances. God had assigned him a task; and Nehemiah was committed. While performing a God-given task, I've often wondered if new circumstances were God's way of redirecting my course. When we stay in God's Word and Prayer, the Holy Spirit can direct us. When we drift away from God, we are uncertain and fearful.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come and lead us (John 14:15-31). How do we discern the voice of the Holy Spirit? I can be in a crowd, but, regardless of the noise level, there are two men's voices that I will hear: my husband and my father. I have spent so much time with both of these men that I immediately recognize their voices. So it is with God. When you spend time in His Word and in prayer, you learn to hear His voice.

Nehemiah 6:1-3, 15-16. Stay focused on the task until God's work is completed. Chapter 6 begins with the wall almost complete and Nehemiah's enemies still in pursuit. Nehemiah received a message from Sanballat and Geshem, asking him to meet them. He immediately recognized an evil plot, so he sent word that he was working and could not come. Nehemiah's enemies were persistent, sending the message multiple times (vs. 4-11). He realized

that the messages were not from God (vs. 12), and that his enemies were "hoping to intimidate" him and make him "sin," resulting in Nehemiah's being discredited (vs. 13). Nehemiah refused to be distracted, and he prayed (vs. 14). God had not given him a message to change direction; therefore, Nehemiah continued with the task that he had been given to accomplish. As a result, the wall was completed the same month, and people everywhere gave God the glory (vs. 15-16).

Nehemiah 8:1-3. God's Word deserves our attention. Chapter 8

begins with the people "assembled with a unified purpose" (vs. 1 - NLT), to hear Ezra the scribe read the Book of the Law of Moses, "which the Lord had given for Israel to obey." (vs. 1c - NLT) The Jews have been registered and returned to their homes (Chapter 7). Now they desire to hear from God.

Throughout Scripture, Old and New Testaments, Believers are instructed to

hear and obey the Word of God (Psalm 119; Matthew 13:1-23; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:22). Jesus said, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27 (NLT) The more time we spend in the Word, the easier it will be for a Believer to stay focused on the tasks God has given Him. By studying the Scriptures, Believers learn the characteristics of their Heavenly Father. The actions and ploys of the enemy become more apparent.

Nehemiah 8:5-8. God's Word is to be both read and studied. Paul instructed Timothy to study the Word

so that he wouldn't be ashamed and could accurately teach the Word. (2 Timothy 2:15) Paul used Scripture to defend him-

self (Acts 22, 23), to plead the cause of Christ (Acts 17:2; 18:4-5), and to encourage Believers. When he appeared before Festus, Paul was accused by Festus of being insane because of his knowledge of the Scriptures (Acts 26:24). Neither the Believer, nor the

nonBeliever doubted Paul's knowledge of the Scripture.

Throughout Scripture in passages such as 2 Kings 23 (King Josiah), the Word of God was read and men were convicted and motivated. Ezra read God's Word, and he and the people broke in to praise: "Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." Nehemiah 8:5-6 (NLT)

Romans 12:2 instructs Believers to "... let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." Believers change thought patterns and beliefs by reading and studying the Word of God. As we examine the Scriptures, we come to know Who God is. We love Him for His mercy, justice, and consistency. We read the accounts of biblical heroes to learn the character and magnificence of a God Who performs mighty miracles, yet, cares about the smallest detail of a person's life. And as we read and study, our thinking is transformed and we are motivated to live a life that exemplifies our savior (Galatians 2:20). Reading and studying Scripture should be a priority in the Believer's life.

Bannister is a member of Woodville Church, Woodville.



Bible Studies for Life

with Lisa Bannister



GUY

cont. from p.2

some men count slackness; but is *longsuffering* (makrothumeno - extremely patient) toward us, not *willing* (boulo-

mai - not willing; nor determined) that *any* (tis - anyone) should *perish*, (apollumi - be lost) but that *all* (pas - anyone and everyone) should come to *repentance* (metanoia - have a true change toward God)." (2 Pet. 3:9).

The translation for these verses is from the Greek Lexicon, used by scholars to translate the Scripture. There are many other verses I could have listed but for the sake of space, I listed those that are easily understood.

We can see that Paul was not a Calvinist and that Jesus died for all mankind. Does this mean all will be saved? No! Salvation is a choice and if you haven't made that choice, I pray that you make it. Here is a further lesson:

Never accept anything as "truth" that's based on one verse of Scripture.

Guy is pastor of Coat Church, Magee. He may be contacted at dgevanmi@bellsouth.net.

Evangelism and leadership focus of NAMB group

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) is launching an evangelism and leadership group that will promote evangelism among Southern Baptist churches, provide evangelistic resources, and equip pastors to help their congregations become more evangelistically active.

Jim Law, who currently serves as executive pastor at First Church in Woodstock, Ga., will serve as executive director of the new group.

"Everything we do at NAMB is focused on sharing the hope of the Gospel," said NAMB president Kevin Ezell. "This group will serve every church and every pastor that wants to become more mobilized and more evangelistically effective."

As executive director, Law will provide day-to-day leadership for the group. In his nearly 28 years at First Church, Woodstock, Law helped make the church one of the top evangelistic churches in North America.

With former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president Johnny Hunt serving as senior pastor and more than 6,000 in weekly worship attendance, First Church, Woodstock is a leader in international missions and church planting in North America.

"All evangelism goes back to the local church," Law said. "What's important to the pastor will be important to his congregation. I want to help make evangelism the top priority and help pastors lead their people in that direction."

The new evangelism and leadership group will include a national evangelism team made up of local pastors

throughout North America who will promote and champion the cause of evangelism. The pastors, while still leading their churches, will speak on behalf of NAMB and help create resources that pastors and churches can utilize.

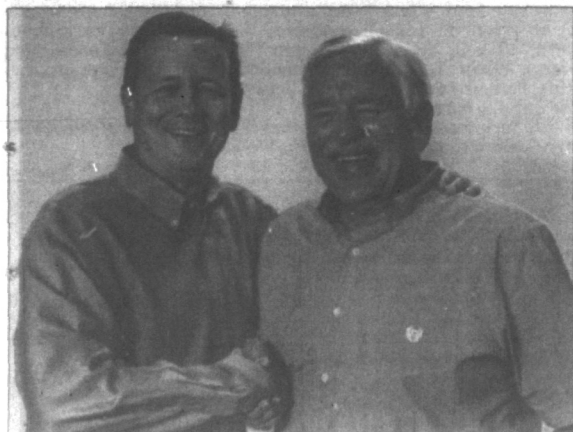
NAMB has had a partnership with the Timothy-Barnabas ministry for several years, allowing it to expand into new regions of North America and offering scholarships to pastors who otherwise could not afford to attend. In June, Timothy-Barnabas founder Hunt shared with NAMB trustees that he was giving the ministry fully to NAMB.

In the area of leadership, the new NAMB group will offer expanded equipping events including Timothy-Barnabas one- or two-day labs focusing on a particular area of pastoral leadership, possibly regional evangelism trainings; Timothy-Barnabas retreats for pastors and their wives; and the Timothy-Barnabas Institute, a new two-year mentoring opportunity for pastors directed by NAMB's national director of young leaders, Joe Akin.

Law hopes NAMB's new effort in evangelism will especially succeed in connecting with younger pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). "Some of the sharpest leaders we have are our young leaders. They are our future. We need to start investing in them more and give them seats around the table."

"That is one of my priorities. We won't have a denomination tomorrow if we don't develop these young leaders. We need their enthusiasm in the SBC."

Law will start in his new role with NAMB on October 1.



Ezell (left) and Law

2,750
STUDENTS ENGAGED
ON TRACK SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES
8,100
SUN-WED
CRUSADE ATTENDANCE
315
SOULS SAVED
334
OTHER SPIRITUAL DECISIONS



Booneville crusade nets hundreds of professions

BOONEVILLE, Ms. (Special) — More than 600 people made commitments to Christ during the Northeast Mississippi GO TELL Crusade April 15-18 in Tiger Stadium on the campus of Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville.

Evangelist Rick Gage, founder of GO TELL Ministries in Duluth, Ga., led the crusade with help from team evangelists Scott Camp of Texas and Adrian Despres of South Carolina. During the crusade week, more than 8,000 attended the four-night outreach and nearly 3,000 students were reached through GO TELL's nationally acclaimed ON TRACK Assembly program.

Before the crusade began, 45 salvation decisions were made by people who attended the Pre-Crusade Rally April 11 at Prentiss County Agri Center in Booneville and the Pre-Crusade Block Party on April 7 at Eastside Park, also in Booneville.

GO TELL Ministries united a variety of evangelistic churches in Prentiss County to prepare the way for this evangelistic crusade.

Among the follow-up results were that eight of the 10 baptisms on April 22 at East Booneville Church were people who trusted Christ during the GO TELL Crusade. The other two were people who had trusted in Jesus for salva-

tion years ago but decided to be scripturally baptized.

Crusade Chairman Marty Roberts, pastor of Oak Hill Church in Booneville, said, "What a mighty move of God we experienced in Booneville, Miss., during the Northeast Mississippi GO TELL Crusade. Two years of praying, planning, and preparation came together over a four-night period."

"I heard one man make this statement: 'During the time of invitation, it looked like cows headed toward water as people came to the stage area, responding to the Holy Spirit.' How thirsty our towns have become, longing for a movement of God."

I am thankful for all that the Lord did and continues to do in our small town. I am thankful for the opportunity to work alongside many of our area pastors and the GO TELL Team. I encourage you to start praying about having a GO TELL Crusade in your area."

Among the most amazing transformations was when a former prisoner decided to give his life to the Lord after hearing the Gospel message broadcast over the sound system as he was walking to a nearby convenience store.

"Apparently, the Lord was tugging at his heart and he knew he needed to turn around and come back," said Prentiss County Sheriff Randy Tolar, who noted he has known the prisoner since he was a local teenager who had become trapped in a cycle of drug abuse.

"All the times I ever dealt with [the prisoner], he treated me with respect. [He] was in and out of jail and prison regularly," Tolar recalled.

As he offered him a ride home from the crusade, Tolar said, "[The prisoner] was sobbing the whole time. I told him how proud I was of him and encouraged him to get involved with a local church. He told me that Brother Rex Bullock had invited him many times to church."

Bullock, pastor of East Pleasant Ridge Church in Baldwin, is not only the sheriff's pastor but also a childhood friend of the prisoner. Tolar said he and Bullock both cried as they discussed the life-changing decision made by the prisoner.

Patrick Eaton, a member of East Booneville Church, said, "My family of six is now all saved. To God be the Glory!"

Pastor Keith Phillips of Westside Church in Baldwin noted, "This week I watched my 25-year-old daughter leading girls to the Lord. I watched my son-in-law leading people to Christ. I watched my 21-year-old son leading people to Jesus. I watched my wife leading people to Christ."

"I had the joy of assisting many counselors as well as counseling myself, but the greatest joy was when my 20-year-old daughter, who I hadn't seen in three-and-a-half years, came to Christ. Praise God!"

For more information, visit NMSGottell.org, and GoTellMinistries.com.